SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

6th Year – November 6, 1972

No 172

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CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

6 FEB 13 1973
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THE NFL CC APPEALS:

Let us solve our internal affairs in the spirit of national reconciliation and concord

"Dear countrymen and combatants,

PROCEEDING from its serious attitude and goodwill for a peaceful settlement of the South Viet Nam issue, and with the concurrence of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, early this month, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam held private meetings with the US Government, and the two sides reached an "Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam" on the basis of the draft Agreement proposed by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. Both sides also agreed to set October 31, 1972 as the day for the signing of this Agreement.

But on October 23, 1972, going back on its pledges, the United States pretexted difficulties, said to have been pointed up by the Saigon administration, to postpone the signing of the Agreement. This double-dealing of the US government has prolonged the war and prevented the restoration of peace in Viet Nam, cutting across the earnest aspirations of the Vietnamese people, the American people and the world's people as a whole. This dilatory act of the American side has aroused high indignation among our people and public opinion in the United States and the world over.

The South Vietnamese people and the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation sternly denounces to public opinion at home and abroad, including the United States, the Nixon administration's lack of goodwill and seriousness. The South Vietnamese people and the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation fully support the October 26, 1972 Statement on the present state of negotiations relating to the Viet Nam issue made public by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

We demand that the US government keep its commitments and sign the Agreement as scheduled with a view to ending the war, restoring peace in Viet Nam, contributing to the consolidation of peace in Asia and the world, thus meeting the legitimate demands and earnest aspirations of the Vietnamese people, the American people and the peoples around the world.

Dear countrymen and combatants,

NEVER, for nearly 30 years now, have gunshots ceased for a single day in the Southern part of our beloved country. For more than ten years now we have been facing the most brutal war of aggression in history. More than any one else we want peace, real peace in independence and freedom. Over the past four years we have shown our goodwill and serious attitude in the negotiations to end the war and restore peace in Viet Nam. However, the Nixon administration only wants to use the negotiations to fool public opinion, prolong the war of aggression and maintain the puppet administration in a bid to materialize US colonialism in South Viet Nam and prolong the partition of our country. But, all the Nixon administration's perfidious schemes and manoeuvres have been exposed. Its bellicose and stubborn nature and stand of colonialist aggression have been resolutely opposed by the American people and peoples around the world.

In their just struggle, though having gone through innumerable hardships and sacrifices, our people have won and are winning. Our people and armed forces have fought with matchless heroism and recorded very glorious victories.

On our victorious way, we have taken a very flexible, fair and reasonable stand with regard to a solution. We want to bring an end to the war and restore peace on the basis of respect for the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people and the right of self-determination of the South Vietnamese people. We want to achieve national concord in South Viet Nam so that our entire people can together heal the wounds of war and rebuild our country.

The Agreement reached by the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the United States of America, if put into effect, will bring an early end to the US war of aggression and completely terminate US military involvement in Viet Nam. Every nationalist-minded Vietnamese welcomes this Agreement and resolutely opposes all the schemes of the US imperialists to prolong the war and their intervention in the internal affairs of our nation.

Once the US imperialist aggressors have left our country and ceased all their involvement in SouthViet Nam, our people will be fully able to solve all their internal affairs in the spirit of national reconciliation and concord, equality and mutual respect. It is the US imperialists who have sown division and enmity among our people, in every hamlet, every street and every family. That is an utterly cruel and perfidious scheme, but we are never deceived by them. The South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam have always advocated unity and national concord.

All our countrymen without distinction as to political or religious tendencies, social strata or nationalities, and whatever their past, share the same desire and obligation to move from hostility, to normally build mutual love, contribute to the reconstruction of the country, and establish a lasting stability. It is in this spirit that the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam advocate the following: right after the cease-fire as agreed upon by the said Accord, the NFL and PRG will readily consult with the Saigon administration and other political forces in order to solve the internal affairs of South Viet Nam. But the US imperialists intend to sabotage peace and have delayed the signing of the Agreement already reached while Nguyen Van Thieu raves for the prolongation of the war and a crackdown on all tendencies to peace, independence, democracy and national concord.

FACED with such a cruel and crafty enemy, the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation calls upon all our countrymen and combatants to fully support the October 26, 1972 Statement of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the October 28, 1972 Statement of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, enhance their unity, hold high their vigilance, resolutely brave all difficulties and hardships, persist in and step up their war of resistance, and together with their blood-sealed compatriots in the North materialize President Ho's Sacred Testament, uphold the determination to fight and to defeat the US aggressors. For independence and freedom, let us dash forward in the impetus of victories, achieve many more exploits by wiping out the enemy to save the motherland. Countrymen living abroad, bring into full play your tradition of national unity, stand shoulder to shoulder with the people at home, push ahead your patriotic activities and make your best contributions to the invincible resistance of our people against US aggression.

Our people have the great strength of national unity. We have the splendid combat co-ordination of the brotherly Cambodian and Lao peoples and armed forces. Morever, we are enjoying the militant solidarity and great assistance of the whole progressive mankind. By persisting in and intensifying our struggle, side by side with the people throughout the country, we will certainly win many and yet greater sucesses.

The South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation Central Committee calls on the people in the areas still under US-puppet control, all personalities, intellectuals, religious people, workers, functionaries and businessmen to enhance their unity and persist in the struggle to demand that the United States sign the "Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam" on October 31 as it has promised and that the US and Nguyen Van Thieu end the war so that the sides in South Viet Nam can soon consult with one another to implement the Agreement in order to achieve national reconciliation and concord, guarantee democratic liberties for the people and build a new life in peace, independence, democracy, national concord and prosperity.

The National Front for Liberation Central Committee calls on the soldiers and officers in the Saigon army to see clearly the following: the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace is ready to be signed, but because of the obstinacy of the United States and Nguyen Van Thieu, you continue to be used as cannon-fodder, your families continue to suffer and our homeland continues to be devastated. You have no alternative but to unite with the people to demand that the US imperialists end the war and restore peace so that you may soon return to your families, to your people, to your native villages and to your Fatherland and contribute to the building of the country.

On this occasion, the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation calls on the Soviet people, the Chinese people and the people of the other socialist countries, all independence-and freedom-loving peoples in the world and the peace- and justice-loving American people to resolutely demand that the Nixon administration sign without delay the Agreement between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. The people and the National Front for Liberation of South Viet Nam call on all their friends in the five continents, who have warmly sympathized with and supported the South Vietnamese people, to give still stronger support and assistance to the just cause of the South Vietnamese people till their final victory.

The South Vietnamese people will win!
The Vietnamese nation will win!
The three Indochinese peoples will win!"

South Viet Nam, October 29, 1972
The NFL CC of South Viet Nam

in the cities

o A meeting was held in Saigon on October 13, where 400 railway workers issued a statement laying stress on the growing misery of the labouring people, as a result of US-Saigon prolongation of the war and soaring the cost of living.

It was also noted that wages had been frozen for two full years and payment always delayed for ten to twenty days.

The participants in the meeting raised the unanimous demand that workers be paid on schedule, that wages and high cost of living allowances be raised, and more jobs be created.

o 1,400 cyclocab drivers in Saigon have recently made public a protest against high taxes and doubling of spare-part prices. Their "income tax" and "total income tax" have shot up steeply to secure over 3 million piastres for Thieu this year as against 668,000 piastres in 1970.

o It has been revealed by the Viet Nam General Federation of Labour in Saigon that traffic, especially ocean shipping, has reduced sharply. As a result, the life of some 8,000 port workers has received a direct hit. In the past, around 200 stevedores used to be taken in every day. Now there is just enough work for about 50, and a man who can get hired 7 or 8 days a month can count himself lucky, although what he earns is barely enough to keep him from starving.

o On October 9, 3rd-year students of the Phu Tho Polytechnic petitioned in a body the Saigon government for draft deferment.

o On October 10, Thieu gave orders for a purge among his so-called National Police to get rid of unwanted elements. Immediately after that, batches of his opponents were demoted or forced to resign. Two days later, he summoned all the provincial chiefs to Saigon to inform them of his plan to "purify" the grass-roots administration. Then, during a reshuffle at the Lower House, he managed, through violence and bribery, to place his hand-picked men at the head of the most important committees.

o Strict security measures have been taken in Saigon since the beginning of October. Police forces are combing all the interior precincts while regular army units are incessantly raiding the suburbs. Machine-gun-mounted police cars prowl the city on a permanent basis and US aircraft are on "special missions" day and night. Behind this "security" signboards, the Thieu clique is actually intensifying impress and liquidation of "uncooperative" elements.

o On October 24, Thieu ordered the seizure of the paper *Tranh Thu*. Its editor-in-chief was sentenced to 3 years of prison and a fine of 5 million piastres.

The same day, several other dailies were confiscated. *Dai Dan Toc* was penalized for having carried reports on the US bombing of the French General Delegation in Hanoi and on the subsequent death of its head, Pierre Susini.

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(Continued)

in the shadow of the american embassy in Saigon

OF all the schemes hatched in the "Dragon's Head Palace" the most heinous is incontestably the invitation extended to the US to send a 500,000-strong expeditionary corps to South Viet Nam. It accounts for the nickname of "Le Chieu Thong of the Second Republic" given to Thieu by the Saigonese. Le Chieu Thong, let us recall, is that felonious prince who towards the end of the 18th century called in Tsing troops to help him save his regime in decomposition, and whose name has become a byword for cowardice and treason.

Still alive in the people's memory is that picture of Thieu and his crony Nguyen Huu Co standing on the flight-deck of the aircraft-carrier *Independence* in mid-1966. Thieu was putting his signature to a 500-pound bomb which was to be dropped on North Viet Nam by American aircraft. The American generals present nodded approval but eye-witnesses recount that many of the sailors hooted or spat. That signature put on an engine of death can never be forgotten by the Saigonese, and especially by those who had come from the North and still have relatives and friends there.

Thieu's financial deals go hand in hand with his political machinations. He is the leader of a new class of men in military uniform who hold sway over the country's economic and financial resources. The size of his bank accounts is of course a well-guarded "State secret." But indiscretions from his entourage give us some rough idea of his wealth.

When he was the colonel commanding the 5th Infantry Division stationed north of Saigon in the years 1962-63, Thieu once boasted to his chief-of-staff that he had a nest-egg of some 20,000 US dollars tucked away in a Hongkong bank, the equivalent of eight million Saigon piastres. By the time he became chairman of the "National Leadership Committee," that bank account had swollen to at least fifty times that amount, and his wife, in one of her trips abroad, went to Rome, ostensibly to visit the Vatican, in fact for financial operations, which involved important deposits in Italian banks and the purchase of a large villa in the western suburbs of that capital city. In 1966, some representatives back from a foreign tour supplied hints of the princely life led by Nguyen Van Hieu, Saigon ambassador to Australia and Thieu's elder brother. In French and Japanese colonial times, Hieu was a notoriously cruel and corrupt mandarin in Yen Dinh, Thieu Hoa and Ninh Thuan. Now besides his "diplomatic" functions, he makes trips by PanAm jets to Paris, Rome, Geneva, etc. to look after the overseas financial interests of the Thieu clan, dropping casual remarks about "my brother the President" at diplomatic cocktail parties.

Nguyen Van Kieu, Thieu's younger brother, was at one time head of the "Relief Funds to Flood Victims in Trung Bo" and is now widely travelling abroad to prepare for the comfortable "withdrawal" of the whole Thieu tribe to Taiwan or Switzerland.

A relative newcomer to the "Independence Palace" (*Dinh Doc Lap* in Vietnamese, and often read by Saigon wags as *Dinh Co-Lap*, or Isolation Palace) is Trang Si Tan, the lieutenant-colonel commanding the city police and the right-hand man of the pimp mayor Do Kien Nhieu (see *supra*). He is Thieu's son-in-law and has been dubbed "Prince Consort of the Nguyen Court." He is a swarthy, burly fellow, with slant eyes and a breath reeking of alcohol. His special skill resides in torturing, which he does with cold-blooded ingenuity. Besides such routine business as the electricity or water torture, he relishes such sadistic practices as sticking US-made needles into the nipples of girl students suspected of anti-Thieu feelings. It is due to such beastly "innovations" that from a police underling he has risen to his present position and can look forward to being promoted a full police colonel pretty soon.

Each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning the sentries at "Isolation Palace" would see a black Mercedes and a dark-blue Mercury drive past the gate into the grounds of the palace. There would alight from them Dang Van Quang, Do Kien Nhieu and Trang Si Tan. At these regular meetings, usually chaired by Hoang Duc Nha, Thieu's press secretary and closest adviser, they would discuss the security situation in the city, with special reference to the stability, or rather instability, of the Presidential posture, and how to remedy it. The agenda is a crowded one, for new headaches crop up every day. Anti-American feeling has run so high lately that Bunker has ordered the 30,000 or so Americans still in the city "to avoid all contacts and clashes with the Vietnamese, to beware of linguistic misunderstandings, and to make themselves scarce whenever some ugly incident involving Americans occur." Also on the rise has been open opposition to Thieu ever since he scored that walk-over in the infamous one-man presidential race. The number of "recalcitrant and uncooperative" deputies has shot up while "insolent" editorials have been appearing regularly on over 40 daily publications. Thieu's advisers are also preoccupied with the attitude of the intellectuals — lawyers, doctors, professors... In their retreats in Hoc Mon, Thu Duc, or Go Vap, they have suddenly ceased to devote their time to raising song-birds and wild orchids, as they have been doing in recent months to show their coldness to the regime. Now they start engaging in heated political debates, in which such explosive remarks as the following have been heard: "It's impossible to live with the present regime!" — "This regime is a challenge to human dignity!" — "To sit with folded arms is to condone crime!" etc. A priest, Truong Ba Can, writes in the *Dien Tin*: "Mr Thieu is the only obstacle on the road to peace." A bonze, the Venerable Giap Duc: "Thieu is the war president." Others, like the Catholic priests Chan Tin, Nguyen Dinh Thi and Nguyen Viet Khai, denounce the Saigon regime as "rootless," "anti-national," while praising the achievements of the North. Small wonder that on orders from Thieu, a veritable war has been started against the press. Small wonder too that, following each of the above-mentioned meetings of his right-hand men, more people are flung into jail or sent to the penal island of Con Son (Poulo Condor). The *Khaki Party* is fast becoming the Cudgel Party, whose very survival depends solely on repression — naked, unscrupulous, brazen-faced repression.

In this veritable war, Thieu has attained new records: in May alone, he ordered the confiscation of no less than 165 newspaper issues, the highest peak in his crackdown on the press so far. Indeed he had no choice, for the press has been publishing highly "subversive" stuff. For instance, this item in *Dan-Chu Moi* (New Democracy) which follows a scathingly ironical essay on "The GI Problem": "The children in the North dig their own air-raid shelters, wear plaited-straw protective helmets, feed on cassava, and successfully stand up to American aircraft. They truly spring from a heroic people!"

In the "war against students," the Thieu administration has ordered the arrest of such student leaders as Buu Chi, secretary general of the Association of Creative Students, in Hue, and Nguyen Duy Hien, head of the students' Social Work Team in the same city, together with over 300 other students. Still another war, that "against the Third Force", has been waged against those who stand for peace, neutrality, and national concord, whose numbers have been increasing among intellectuals and other strata, including deputies and religious leaders. But the most fiercely waged of them all has been the war against the over three million Saigonese with a view to press-ganging ever more people and grabbing ever more wealth for the war against the patriotic forces, which threatens to bring about the collapse of the whole regime. More than 200,000 civilians have been pressed into the army and inflation has passed the 200 billion piastres mark. These staggering figures are the topics of heated discussions among the Saigonese for the policies worked out in the "Dragon's Head Palace" are depleting their already very lean pocketbooks, and threatening not only their livelihood but their very lives and those of their dear ones. This is the thing that is likely to toll the knell of the Nguyen Van Thieu dynasty.

While alarming reports have been streaming into the "Independence Palace" from every quarter, rumour has it that the relationship between the American proconsul and "President" Thieu has become heavily tinged with bitterness. Thieu and his aides, Quang and Nha, have been perusing the newly-disclosed secret papers of the Pentagon, particularly the chapters on the decisions taken by President Kennedy in the course of those five fateful meetings of the National Security Council held in the period from August to November 1963, which resulted in a plan to overthrow Diem and Nhu, an operation which was to be headed by a CIA chieftain and to involve many generals of the Diem army itself.

In the light of those documents, the praise recently bestowed upon Thieu by President Nixon: "You are a talented leader, equal to your responsibility, etc." took on a sinister meaning when one recalls a similar commendation given to Diem by President Kennedy.

Over the past few years, Thieu has never failed to order fairly sumptuous commemorative ceremonies on the occasion of the anniversary of Diem's death. Requiem masses are as a rule held at the Church of the Virgin Mary. On October 1, 1971, when a 400-strong procession marched out from the Church along Hai Ba Trung boulevard to the cemetery on Mac Dinh Chi street for a wreath-laying ceremony at Diem's grave, Thieu's wife distinguished herself by the particular loudness with which she vented her grief. The Saigonese were not surprised, for they knew that the tears were in fact being shed over the impending doom of the Thieu regime itself.

The Saigon press has made this observation about three outstanding sites in the city: the "Independence Palace," the American Embassy, and the Mac Dinh Chi cemetery. These three symbolic places are all situated in the same district and are separated by equal distances (about one kilometre), which causes them to stand at the apexes of an equilateral triangle. Incidentally, the Mac Dinh Chi cemetery used to be called the "Cemetery of the French Ghost."

(to be continued)

THANH NAM

Effective anti-draft drive in South Viet Nam towns

TO offset the shortage of manpower caused by heavy combat losses, the Saigon administration has in the past few months left no stone unturned to impress soldiers. Especially in September and early in October, Nguyen Van Thieu issued many "regulations" and "decrees" mobilizing all religious believers and school youths in possession of draft-deferment papers, annulling draft exemption for all men in the professional and religious circles and showing no consideration for their family situation. With such arbitrary decision, he has challenged public opinion at home and abroad and ridden roughshod over the regulations he has just signed. The very promulgation of these fascist laws indicates that Thieu is in hot waters.

For South Vietnamese, especially the youths and religious believers in enemy-held areas have risen up as one man and foiled impressing operations.

Anti-draft organizations have been set up by youths everywhere in enemy-controlled areas in South Viet Nam. Saigonese have organized or strengthened their watching, intelligence collecting and alarm-giving system to fight round-ups. They have also been mounting actions against impress.

At T. and B., the villagers punished a dozen wicked policemen engaged in this drafting business and served warning on many others who were quickly frightened off their job. Besides, the inhabitants lectured Saigon soldiers into siding with the revolution and not doing any harm to their fellow countrymen. In X. district, many actions have been staged for better living conditions, democracy, batter sanitation and employment for the the population and against repression, taxation, fines and terror. The X. district inhabitants have set up first-aid teams, friendship associations (to assist financially one another to find employment for one another), fire-brigades and organizations against evil-doers. Protected by the population, draftdodgers and deserters in X. district have armed themselves for an eventual confrontation with the enemy.

In such towns and cities as Can Tho, Ben Tre, My Tho, Tay Ninh, Long Xuyen, Tra Vinh, Quang Ngai, Da Nang, when a round-up takes place, the inhabitants immediately surround the policemen to prevent them from marching youths away or to help the latter escape. Wherever repression is harsh, the thugs are pelted with stones and beaten with sticks and bludgeons. Wives of raw recruits lie on the pavement to block military lorries carrying their men to training centres and lash out at the Thieu clique uninhibitedly. Taking advantage of the confusion, many youths manage to run away.

The anti-draft drive of religious followers and school youths is also very stubborn. After the signing of decree 002 abolishing draft exemption and deferment right for clergymen, a protest meeting was convened in Saigon by the major religious communities in South Viet Nam—Buddhism, Catholicism, Cao Dai and Hoa Hao. They also call on their priests and believers to join in the fight. They combine such legal actions with violence against Thieu's impressing policemen. While sending petitions to Tran Thien Khiem and deputations to Thieu, the Ministry of Defence and the Saigon Lower House, for the cancellation of this decree, priests and believers in Saigon, Tay Ninh, Tra Vinh and Soc Trang have fought hundreds of times with arguments and sticks, side-arms and hand-grenades against policemen who have broken into pagodas and sanctuaries to apprehend bonzes and believers and send them to the front. The Cao Dai Holy See at Tay Ninh has even given orders to all its temples to resolutely protect their youths. Many religious institutions are kept under lock and key and guarded by armed youths. At Tra Vinh, the Buddhist bonzes impressed have staged a hunger strike and stubbornly refused to go and fight for the Yankees. At Soc Trang, 300 others who had fled from army barracks attacked the policemen sent in to arrest them, with stones, knives, pliers and hammers, injuring an officer and destroying a jeep. At Long Xuyen, over 2,000 youths and students of Hoa Hao university took to the streets against the closing of schools and against the general mobilization order. In Saigon, Can Tho, Ba Ria and Long Khanh, draft-resisters got at twenty thugs with knives or hand-grenades taken from the enemy.

As the movement has been mounting among various sections of the population, many Saigon "MPs" and even Ministers' Council members have raised their voices against Thieu's unpopular measures, but vainly. The South Viet Nam townsfolk in serried ranks, are combining anti-impress actions to protect their men, with the fight for better living conditions and democracy, in order to speed up the bankruptcy of "Vietnamization."

AI THI

JOINT CONFERENCE OF RSVN ADVISORY AND GOVERNMENT COUNCILS

THE sympathy and strength support of non-aligned countries for the just struggle of the South Vietnamese people, support which culminated in the recognition of the RSVN PRG as official member of the non-aligned world, was highlighted at a recent joint conference of the Advisory Council and Council of Ministers of the PRG of the Republic of South Viet Nam.

The conference held admist in-pouring news of splendid victories recorded by the South Viet Nam armed forces and people in their current offensive and uprisings, heard reports on the great successes of the South Vietnamese people on the diplomatic front in the past few months.

It was attended by the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Advisory Council and Government Council, members of the AC, Ministers, Vice Ministers and members of the SVN National Front for Liberation Central Committee.

In his report, Mr Hoang Bich Son, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, spoke in detail of the successful Conference of Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries held in Georgetown, capital of Guyana, from August 8 to 12 and of the important development of the movements in non-aligned countries against imperialism, old and neo-colonialism, to win back real independence and freedom.

The conference was very glad about the increasing sympathy and support of government and people in the world for the anti-US resistance of the SVN people, especially the strong support of many governments, political organizations and broad public opinion in the world to the September 11, 1972 Statement of the PRG.

The conference was elated at the successes of the NFL and PRG delegations headed by Minister Nguyen Thi Binh, Vice-Ministers Le Quang Chanh and Hoang Bich Son, and Special Envoys Vo Dong Giang and Nguyen Van Tien, in their visits to countries of Latin America, Africa and North-western Europe.

The audience gave a big hand to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the RSVN and the Republics of Chile and Uganda and the recognition of the PRG by the Government of Equatorial Guinea.

Closing the conference, President Nguyen Huu Tho warmly welcomed the success of the PRG on the diplomatic front and expressed the gratitude of the PRG to governments and international organizations, especially those of non-aligned countries, for their sympathy and support for the just cause of the South Vietnamese people, and vehemently condemned the US imperialists' aggression.

On this occasion, the President also warmly praised the great victories recorded on the military and political fronts by the South Viet Nam armed forces and people in the past months, particularly since the start of the current offensive in March 1972.

President Nguyen Huu Tho called on all the SVN armed forces and people to develop further the effects of their great and allround victories, step up their offensive and uprisings and march forward to defeat completely the US aggressors.

THIEU MULTIPLIES EXTORTIONIST MEASURES

TO make up the budget deficit, the Thieu clique have feverishly stepped up tax collection and imposed many new and absurd taxes on the people in the areas still under their control.

The Thieu administration has forced the people to pay:

— house foundation tax: 145 piastres per square metre;

— tile-roofed house tax: 25 piastres per square metre, and thatched house tax: 10 piastres per square metres;

— cattle tax: 400 piastres per head a year;

— one horse power motor tax: 350 a year;

— sewing machine tax: 200 a year;

— tax on precious wood furniture: from 200 to 1,000 piastres a year;

— fishing net tax: 5,000 piastres for each fishing season;

— tax on rehabilitated crop-land: from 1,000 to 2,000 piastres per hectare a year.

Besides, the post commanders in all localities may impose as many taxes as they like.

In Kien Phong province, every fisherman must pay from 5,000 to 50,000 piastres. Every boat transporting rice is levied 100 to 200 piastres when passing by a post.

Besides, the Thieu clique have forced the people to pay all kinds of contributions; in Bung Mon concentration camp (My Tho province) each household has to supply from five to ten litres of paraffin to the garrisoning troops.

In almost all provinces, each family has to contribute from 200 to 20,000 piastres per month to feed shock "popular defence" forces.

More brazen still, the Thieu clique have forced people to pay bribes if they want to avoid conscription, upgrading from the paramilitary forces to the regular army, forcible labor and free of all charges with "supporting the Vietcong."

Families with members of draft age are forced to pay bribes ranging from 30,000 to 50,000 piastres every five or seven months.

To shirk the weekly forcible labour contribution, one must pay 500 piastres per week. Any "popular defence" member who wants to be free from guard duty, has to pay 1,000 piastres a month.

Any person charged with "Vietcong sympathizing" has to pay 100,000 piastres to be spared from arrest and imprisonment.

6 months of offensives and uprisings

AN EFFLORESCENCE OF FEATS IN ALL THEATRES

● ON THE QUANG TRI — THUA THIEN

QUANG TRI-Thua Thien has turned out a most disastrous battlefield for enemy manpower and war materials. In spite of their dense and solid defence network and modern equipment, Saigon regular forces could hardly resist the PLAF punches. In the first 33 days of the latter's offensive, they took over 33,500 casualties including 3,500 (more than 100 company and field officers) captured and almost 10,000 disbanded. And in only two onslaughts lasting no more than five days each, over 2 divisions, 8 brigades, regiments and multi-battalions, and 4 armoured regiments were knocked out or heavily decimated, an all-time high of destruction of adverse big units in the war.

During 100 days and nights or so in a row, in counter-attacks north of the My Chanh river, Thua Thien liberation forces put out of action or captured over 30,000 paratroops and marines — US-Thieu crack units. Though fully and massively supported by the US Air Force and Navy, they lost an equivalent of two full divisions and in Thua Thien more than 9,000 men.

As regards hardware, the PLAF downed, destroyed or seized 746 aircraft, put out of commission or captured 3,815 military vehicles (807 tanks and APC), 800 artillery pieces and heavy mortars. Over the past six months, the number of aircraft lost in Quang Tri and Thua Thien exceeded the total air strength of the 7th Fleet active in the Pacific. The number of adverse military vehicles wrecked or seized on this front made up more than 60% of the total lost throughout South Viet Nam during the same period.

In Quang Tri and Thua Thien, a key place for testing "Vietnamization" where pacification had been reportedly completed, Nixon had to make the toughest efforts to cope with PLAF onsets. Thus, the wiping out of big, most seasoned Saigon army units, the shattering of strong defence lines and the crushing of the pacification program in Quang Tri by the liberation forces was a deadly blow at "Vietnamization" in the most important sector, upset the enemy's battle array in South Viet Nam and had a very strong impact on the morale of the Saigon troops all over South Viet Nam.

It is also in this region that the Americans had concentrated their air and naval power with a view to halting the imminent collapse of the Saigon client regime under fire. From early June to late September they used a daily average of 1,500 tons of bombs and of 10,000 artillery shells in Quang Tri city and periphery. This deluge was unable nevertheless to prevent Saigon general strategic reserve forces units' bogging down and severe losses. Though Thieu casualties equalled their troop strength, *UPI* of September 19 and 28 remarked, the airborne and marine units could control only 16% of Quang Tri territory. Each metre of land was recovered at the price of a litre of blood.

The successes of the liberation troops and people of Quang Tri and Thua Thien have thus contributed to checking a step of the re-Americanization of Nixon's war, and to strengthening and developing the offensive posture of the PLAF over the past several months, in smooth coordination with the onslaughts and uprisings all over South Viet Nam. From the beginning they have greatly stimulated combatants on the other fronts. By compelling the adverse command to draw from Nam Bo and Central Trung Bo sizable forces, including all Saigon mobile strategic ones, they have made possible substantial gains of the PLAF in the other theatres. In the process of the fighting they have also gained valuable combat experience.

Enemy base at Hiep Duc (Quang Nam) besieged by PLAF

● ON THE CENTRAL TRUNG BO FRONT

SINCE the end of March and during the whole of April 1972, the Central Trung Bo people and armed forces were engaged in a powerful drive of attacks and uprisings, in close coordination with the rest of South Viet Nam, hitting hard at all US-Saigon military positions and kinds of armed forces. In battles fought by all the three kinds of troops and specialized units, the PLAF put out of action nearly 36,000 enemy, writing off 37 battalions of the Saigon regular troops and security multi-company outfits, 67 companies and 288 sections. Saigon Division No.22 was struck off the charge and many multi-battalion groups, brigades and regiments heavily decimated.

At the same time, the PLAF broke through many adverse solid defence perimeters, from the sea-coast plains to the Central Highlands, liberating vast areas covering the major parts of Kontum, Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai provinces and other regions, helping hundreds of thousands of people rise up and regain control.

Then, in May, June and July, the enemy hurled his air and naval forces into frantic attacks against populated areas. At the same time, he deployed his regular divisions, ranger units, artillery and armour, in a counter-offensive in the hope of reconquering lost territories. But the people and armed forces of Central Trung Bo kept up their devastating onsets against major bases deep in enemy-controlled areas. All adverse counter-offensives were foiled, and the PLAF put out of action 30,000 enemy, wiping out another 10 battalions, 135 companies and sections, destroying another 800 vehicles, 200 aircraft, 70 guns, burning 20 million litres of petrol, etc. Most outstanding was the Central Highlands PLAF all-out attacks against the enemy in Kontum town, resulting in the occupation of many key sectors, knocking out thousands of enemy troops, battering of Saigon Division No. 23 soon after its transfer to this town to defend it.

Also in May, June and July, a whole series of enemy bases and positions in Quang Da, Quang Nam, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa provinces came under fire, their defenders eventually were either wiped out or forced to run away.

In August, the tidal wave of offensives and uprisings of Central Trung Bo rose even higher especially at Cam Doi and Que Son, in Quang Nam province. The Quang Nam PLAF wrote off two enemy divisions of infantry and armour and erased many artillery positions. They badly trounced Saigon Division No.2, captured or destroyed over 200 military vehicles, nearly 50 guns, demolished the enemy defence belt South of Da Nang, posing a serious threat to enemy troops in this area.

In September — the 6th month of offensives and uprisings — the people and armed forces of Central Trung Bo repeatedly assaulted enemy mobile columns, while striking at his coercive apparatus, blotting out series of other positions, enlarging the liberated area and giving a hand to civilians in their uprisings in many places.

Remarkably in Quang Ngai province, beginning from the night of September 15, the PLAF smashed the enemy military subsector and district capital of Ba To, heavily depleting a unit of frontier rangers garrisoned there while inflicting serious losses on "security" and "self defence" units in other districts.

In seven days, they wiped out more than 2,000 enemy, destroying or disbanding dozens of companies, 42 sections, levelling or forcing the adversary out of 35 positions and bases, driving him away from 23 "population resettlement centres and "strategic hamlets." Nearly 50,000 people were freed. The US-Saigon regime hurriedly sent in 2 battalions from regiment No.4, and the whole regiment No.2 as well as 4 battalions of frontier rangers. But all those units were again knocked out or badly mauled.

In sum, the people and armed forces of Central Trung Bo have won a momentous and all-round success after 100 days and nights of offensives and uprisings:

— Knocking out or forcing to surrender nearly 120,000 enemy, including 3 Divisions and 95 sections of infantry, artillery and armouf and dozens of regiment and division CPs wiped out or badly battered.

— Levelling dozens of enemy bases defended by units from battalion to division size.

— Capturing or destroying over 3,400 military vehicles, 380 guns and heavy mortars, over 220 logistic depots, burning or blowing up nearly 200,000 tons of bombs and shells, nearly 60 million litres of petrol, shooting down or destroying over 700 aircraft, sending to the bottom or setting afire 35 vessels and combat launches, destroying 157 bridges and culverts, collecting over 12,000 weapons of all kinds, nearly 1,000 transceivers, dozens of tons of ammunition and war materials.

— Liberating many areas with more than 600,000 people. US-Saigon local "pacification" program was ruined, and their defence system shattered in its most vital parts.

● IN THE NAM BO DELTA

SINCE early April 1972, steady progress has been accomplished by the people and armed forces of the Mekong Delta, in the midst of dismal discomfiture of the US "pacification" plan in this key area.

As a curtain-raiser, on the night of April 6, the people and armed forces of Central Nam Bo attacked the coercive system of the enemy on his defence line along Duong Van Duong arroyo and in many vital sectors of Kien Tuong, My Tho, Ben Tre, Kien Phong provinces. From the Tien Giang River to Ca Mau Cape, US-Saigon positions came under a deluge of shells from the liberation forces of Western Nam Bo.

In the first two months of the offensive only (April and May), 34,000 enemy were put out of action, 43 battalions wiped out or heavily decimated, 585 military posts razed or forcibly evacuated, 20 communes and 290 hamlets entirely liberated with 700,000 inhabitants.

As June came, the liberation forces of Central Nam Bo in a series of powerful onslaughts on the enemy defence system at the frontier, heavily battered the enemy frontier rangers north of Tan Thanh bordering on the two provinces of Kien Phong and Kien Tuong: many enemy positions defending the border were thus obliterated.

While a major part of enemy mobile forces was pinned down and knocked out in the border area, the My Tho, Ben Tre, Go Cong provinces people and armed forces launched onsets on the adverse coercive apparatus and liberated vast areas covering thousands of square miles running from the Nguyen Van Tiep arroyo, through Highway 4 to Mo Cay, Giong Trom (Ben Tre) Hoa Dong (Go Cong). Big losses were suffered by enemy local "oppressive centres," logistic bases of the Fourth Military Region, and strategic communications.

In Western Nam Bo, since June the PLAF have stepped up their operations against the enemy's "pacified" rear, in Rach Gia, Ca Mau, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long provinces. The border defence line running from An Giang to Ha Tien and the inner defence line in U Minh were both chopped up.

In the three months of June, August and September, the activity of the people and armed forces of the Mekong Delta grew in intensity and their experience became richer and their foothold in vital sectors more solid. In My Tho in particular, a substantial amount of enemy manpower was destroyed while the liberated areas were fast expanding into an effective springboard for the revolution. In July, My Tho people and armed forces put out of action over 5,400 enemy, liberated 12 communes and 36 hamlets with 65,000 people. In more recent months, they violently hit at the enemy's oppressive forces on Highway 4, liberated new areas, thus paving the way for the sealing off of this communication line of paramount importance linking Saigon to the Mekong Delta.

To assist the people's uprisings in an efficient way, the PLAF, especially the guerillas and regional armed forces, got at the enemy mobile columns and paramilitary formations, the "civil guard" and "people's self-defence" units.

In all the last six months, the people and armed forces of Central Nam Bo knocked out 17,500 members of "civil guard." In less than 20 days, the Ben Tre guerillas and regional forces badly mauled the newly-formed 2nd multi-battalion group of "civil guard."

Political unrest rapidly expanded with new particularities. From April to the end of September, 2,200,000 attendances were recorded in demonstrations against enemy forcible enrolment, wanton shelling and for the release of draftees, and compensations

(*Continued on page 6*)

An efflorescence of feats in all theatres

(Continued from page 5)

ON THE EASTERN NAM BO BATTLE FRONT

SINCE the beginning of April the Eastern Nam Bo liberation forces, from Binh Long, Phuoc Long, Tay Ninh to Northern Gia Dinh, Thu Dau Mot, Bien Hoa, Long An, Ba Ria, Long Khanh have been very devastatingly active against the enemy's most sturdy defence line north of Saigon and his rural apparatus of repression, have wiped out a major part of his regular forces in the 3rd and 4th tactical areas and liberated vast territories of a highly strategic value to our resistance.

Opening the drive, the Binh Long PLAF rapidly broke up the enemy's defence line reputed the strongest in this sector, lying over sixty miles along the frontier, parallel to Highway 13, from 25 to 30 miles in depth. Whole series of bases and positions were levelled. In less than a week, the liberation forces either knocked out or forced to surrender 3 infantry and armour tactical groups and regiments, helped the civilian population rise up and sweep away all the oppressive machinery in Loc Ninh district.

In the flush of their victory, the Binh Long liberation forces encircled Saigon Division 5 in Hon Quan township, cut off the enemy supply on Highway 13, immobilized a major part of his regular forces in both the 3rd and 4th tactical areas and even of his strategic reserves, thereby enabling a vigorous advance of the Eastern Nam Bo people and armed forces' movement of offensives and uprisings. They heavily depleted in succession Saigon Divisions 21 and 18, Para-brigade 1, Infantry Regiment 15 (of Division 9), ranger multi-battalion group 333, and tactical group 6, armour regiment 9.

Its serious and repeated setbacks forced the US-Saigon to give up their plan of disengaging Hon Quan and to move Division 25 back to Chon Thanh to cope with the patriots' onslaughts. Up to now Highway 13 has remained sealed off and adverse forces inside Hon Quan daily came under fire.

While the major part of the Saigon regular forces of the 1st tactical region was pinned down and badly hurt on Highway 13, the people and armed forces of Phuoc Long, Tay Ninh, Long An, Thu Dau Mot, Northern Gia Dinh, Ba Ria, Long Khanh, attacked the enemy without let-up both frontally and in his rear, made deep thrusts into his bases, airfields, depots and military sub-sectors, erasing many positions, wiping out or depleting dozens of regiments, tactical groups and battalions of his regular troops and paramilitary formations (*bao an*), liberating hundreds of villages and hamlets.

In Tay Ninh province, in the first days of April 1972 only, the liberation forces razed to the ground and forced to surrender a whole series of bases and positions of the Saigon army on its defence line along Highway 22, among them such strengthened bases as Xa Mat and Thien Ngon. They knocked out infantry tactical group 49, armour regiment 10, frontier ranger battalion 73, severely decimated Battalion 1 of armour regiment 18, captured or destroyed over 60 military vehicles (among them 30 tanks and armoured cars), downed 14 aircraft.

In Bien Hoa, the PLAF making deep and powerful inroads into the Long Binh logistic depots and Bien Hoa airfield, inflicted particularly heavy losses. In the coup against Bien Hoa airfield on the morning of September 10, 1972, PLAF men wrecked or heavily damaged nearly 200 aircraft of various kinds, 4 big depots containing 1,000 bombs, destroyed 2 aircraft-repairing workshops, killed hundreds of US-Saigon pilots, officers and technicians.

On the Northern Gia Dinh, assaults were often mounted by the PLAF on military subsectors and fire bases. "Strategic hamlets" and bases on Highways 1, 2, 6, 7, 8 and 14 were shattered, and tens of thousands of people along inter-provincial Highway 14 and the Saigon river (from Dau Tieng to Ben Cat) were freed.

Meanwhile, Northeast of Saigon, the PLAF of Ba Ria, Long Khanh encircled and assailed enemy military sub-sectors and positions along Highways 2, 15, 23 and south of Highway 1. As a result, the adversary had to take defensive moves. His main communication lines, including Highways 15, 2 and 23, linking Bien Hoa, Vung Tau, Long Khanh, Ba Ria and Long Dien, Dat Do, Xuyen Moc, were constantly interdicted. Waterways such as Long Tau and Dong Nai rivers, and river ports such as Rach Dua and Nha Be were incessantly harassed. The local "pacification" program was in deep waters.

Thus after 6 months' sustained activity of the Eastern Nam Bo armed forces and people, the enemy defence was completely upset. His most solid defence lines were disastrously shattered and his main force divisions in the 3rd tactical area badly mauled.

Many units of his irregular forces (security, people's "self-defence") and his oppressive set-up were either destroyed or disbanded. The liberated areas were enlarged and consolidated.

According to still incomplete figures, 180 days and nights of offensives and uprisings in Eastern Nam Bo have resulted in 60,000 enemy troops put out of action, main force Divisions 5, 21 and 18 bloodied, dozens of brigades, multi-battalion groups and regiments written off or heavily decimated, some 50 battalions and several hundred companies knocked off the charges, over 200 bases and positions razed to the ground or forcibly evacuated, tens of thousands of weapons of all kinds captured or destroyed, 670 aircraft downed or destroyed, 170 vessels and combat launches sunk or set afire, 1,300 military vehicles, 320 guns and heavy mortars, hundreds of depots containing hundreds of thousands of tons of bombs, shells and fuel, seized or blasted to pieces, vast territories including the major part of Binh Long province and hundreds of villages and hamlets, populated by hundreds of thousands of people, liberated.

Such gains make up a considerable part of all South Viet Nam's in the past 6 months and have dealt a hammer blow at "Vietnamization."

Here and there

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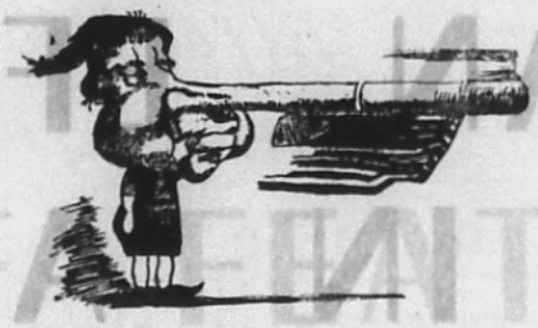

US air supremacy

UPI of October 15, 1972 revealed that US intelligence had spotted the presence of Communists near the artillery base on Highway 14 linking Pleiku to Kontum. But there were no more aircraft left to bomb this enemy concentration since all of them had been committed to actions necessitated by the Communist threat to the north of Saigon.

What price US air supremacy?

Mercantilism

Thieu's ban on newsmen's trips to the front — prompted by his concern for their "safety" or fear of their revelation of governmental irregularities or setbacks, only God knows — causes a lot of difficulties to press correspondents, because it is inadvisable to rely on "official" communiqués. Hence a hectic hunt for news through the only available source: US or Saigon officers having taken part in various operations.

Along the road from Saigon to Dalat, a civil guard company commander bluntly told a *UPI* correspondent who had asked him for information about Communist positions: "I don't hand out military news, my dear Sir, I sell it."

But the newsman concluded that nobody had bought news from that officer (*UPI*, October 18) because he did not know more than the map he had in his hands.

Sensorial sources of information

At the highest level, i.e. the US-Saigon Command in Saigon, one is no better informed.

To such an extent that the *AFP* correspondent (October 19) had to comment that in the Central coastal provinces like Quang Ngai, Quang Tri and particularly Binh Dinh no one was clear about who was in control of this village or that hamlet, who was still occupying it or who was attacking it. The only possible conclusion is that the situation of this or of that area has deteriorated for the last few months.

To such an extent that the most reliable sources of information remain one's eyes and one's ears. If you see the shop windows in Saigon shaking from the rumble of B.52's bombings, that means the Communists are quite near. If you hear uninterrupted rounds of shots and scurrying of troops, that is an indication that "they" are close by. Then the "official" communiqué admits that the tempo of the fighting continues to rise (*AP*, October 20).

Confusion

But Saigon is not the only place under pressure.

In Quang Tri, *US News and World Report* said, the Saigon paratroops and marines, already seriously depleted, continue to come under attack. The Saigon Command would like to give them some breather but could not find relief troops.

UPI pointed out on October 18 that the Saigon Command realized that its exhausted men had to face tasks far beyond their capacities. Badly mauled, thinned out, they are also hindered by interposed battlegrounds, distant from one another, while the Communists still hold the initiative in terms of the choice of the time and place of the fighting. For example on the High Plateaux, beside the dramatic rush of Ben Het, they occupied a whole series of hamlets and sectors controlled by Saigon while extending their sway further with operations of a smaller scale.

Thieu's men tried to float rumours on the "reoccupation" of this or that place but their "communiqués" are contradictory. So, on October 17, they said they had regained "control" of the Saigon-Dalat road but advised the population to "keep clear" of it. On October 18, they asserted: "The Communist offensive on the vicinities of Saigon has hit its peak," to admit the next day a recrudescence of Communist activity.

Boycott

Faced with Communist onsets on the one hand and with political assaults resulting from these on the other, Thieu has been frantically busy these last days summoning one after another all Saigon creations: Lower Chamber, Upper Chamber, Cabinet, representatives of political parties and organization of all stripes to enlist their support.

But 40 "deputies" declared they would abstain from attending the meeting convened not to be taken in by his "propaganda" ploy (*AFP*, October 20).

Presidential concern

On the occasion of the requiem for the dead, during the traditional October 23 of the Veterans, Nixon held an "extempore" meeting with some relatives of POW's. The speech he gave was full of moving concern for them. If one believed his words, he had never had any other preoccupation than that of bringing them home within the shortest delay. He made it abundantly clear that he would not let down the American POW's and GI's reported missing in action, in any eventuality (*USIS*, October 20).

Immediately after his speech, the wife of Captain David Grey, a USAF pilot captive in Viet Nam since 1967 remarked that though the administration affirmed they would not be let down, they still remained in North Viet Nam stockades. Is it for Thieu's sake that they still have to stay there? she queried.

Reporting on the incident, the *International Herald Tribune* added that the President did not answer the question.

HUONG NAM

Laos:

Relentless and successful offensives

BOTH the dry and rainy seasons of 1972 have been very fruitful for the Lao armed forces and people. In the dry season, the patriotic forces put o it of combat 15,000 enemy troops, destroyed a sizeable quantity of US war means including 117 aircraft, 112 military vehicles, dozens of arms, ammunition and other war supplies stores, and hundreds of barracks. Following up these successes, in the rainy season they foiled two major inroads into the liberated zone of the Plain of Jars-Xieng Khoang, defeated the multi-battalion strong raid in Southern Laos, sweeping the enemy out of the liberated area of Dong Hen district, taking a toll of thousands of enemy troops.

In both seasons, the Lao patriotic armed forces launched violent attacks which have altered the war complexion more and more in favour of the patriots.

Never in Laos have the enemy suffered so heavy setbacks. Never have the seasoned outfits of mercenaries of the US imperialists sustained so telling blows. The Thai soldiers pushed by the US into Laos took as many as 7,000 casualties in seven months. The Vang Pao "special forces" fostered, equipped and directly commanded by the US lost 6,600 men within a short period.

"The army of Meo tribesmen regarded as the most hardened force has been depleted and its morale has collapsed," wrote *UPI* about the "special forces" of bandit General Vang Pao.

The French magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* wrote on January 16, 1972: "The Vientiane rightist army which has been battered is taking very serious losses, to such an extent that replenishments cannot fill up the gap. In some places youngsters under 15 and even twelve year-olds have been conscripted."

The Nixon doctrine with its military formula: "Thai troops as shock force plus Vang Pao special forces and Vientiane army with American air support" has once again been thwarted in Laos.

In Northern Laos, the US and its agents mustered early in the 1971 dry season more than 40 battalions in a foray into the Plain of Jars-Muong Suoi area but this ended with the total rout of the raiders. In late August 1972, the enemy again sent about 50 battalions mostly composed of crack units, on a very savage "mop-up" against the liberated zone of the Plain of Jars and Xieng Khoang. However, this large-scale operation was completely defeated within only forty days. In Southern Laos, the enemy deployed almost all their strategic reserve forces comprising more than thirty battalions of the Vientiane army and five battalions of Thai mercenaries, in massive attacks against the Bolovens High Plateaux, Saravane, Khong Sedon and Lao Ngam, but everywhere they went the raiders received violent counter-blows.

While checking almost all major adverse encroachments, the patriotic armed forces of Laos sprang repeated coups on series of enemy positions and posts, encircled them and applied strong pressure on the most important defence lines of the enemy. Most typical of all were the series of battles that shattered their defence complex in the Plain of Jars-Muong Suoi area, the furious onsets against the headquarters of the Vang Pao special forces in Sam Thong-Long Cheng, and the devastating operations on Highway 13 which resulted in the erasing of many posts and the capture of the control over hundreds of miles on this vital strategic road and the serious shaking of the enemy defence perimeter north of Vientiane capital.

On Highway 23 (Southern Laos), many important staging bases of the enemy like Lao Ngam, Khong Sedon, Va Pi and Phia Phay came under frequent fire.

In their sustained effort through the dry and rainy seasons, the Lao liberation army has fought many devastating battles. Between November 1971 and May 1972 it inflicted losses, ranging from moderate to heavy, on 43 battalions including eight "groupements mobiles" (regiment-sized mobile units). From August 20 to September 30, 1972, it foiled the operation conducted by 50 enemy battalions in the Plain of Jars-Xieng Khoang area, causing more than 3,000 casualties. In the attack on the 23rd and 30th "mobile groups" south of the Plain of Jars from October 9 to 12, 1972, the liberation forces wiped out more than 600 enemy. Especially in a daring action on October 18, 1972 in Ban Ngam it wrote off the 621st infantry battalion of Thai troops, destroyed an emplacement of 105mm and 155mm artillery pieces and visited heavy losses on the headquarters of the 401st regiment.

Along with the actions of the Liberation Army, guerilla warfare spread quickly to many areas in the plains, the urban centres, the Nam U area along the Mekong river and even the vicinities of Vientiane, Luang Prabang and Pakse. Consequently a constant threat has been posed to the enemy and part of their mobile pinned down.

The successes of the armed forces and people of Laos in the recent past have pushed the enemy into a position of utter passivity and embarrassment where, in spite of great exertions, they will not be able to avoid ever heavier setbacks. In this connection, it is interesting to recall. The *New York Times* commented early this year that it had become increasingly clear that no amount of aid to the (Vientiane) Laotians could be of any use.

The Lao Patriotic armed forces and people have always held the initiative of action, have become stronger and won more important successes in the course of the fighting The liberated zone of the Lao revolution has been expanded and firmly consolidated into a single stretch throughout the country and linked up with the liberated areas of the people of South Viet Nam and Cambodia, which has rendered more solid the offensive posture of the revolution of the peoples in the Indochinese peninsula.

The Lao Patriotic forces' gains also testified to a splendid co-ordination with the resistance of the Cambodian and Vietnamese peoples against US aggression. They have forced the US and its henchmen to scatter a large portion of their military forces on the Lao battlefield, thereby making it possible for the armed forces and people of Viet Nam and Cambodia to split and deplete the enemy forces. This represents an important and very effective contribution to the anti-US resistance of the 50 million people of the three Indochinese countries.

in brief

o *Hungary:*

During the Week of Solidarity with the Indochinese Peoples from September 2 to 15 there were over two thousand meetings, lectures, exhibitions and film shows in Budapest and other parts of the country to acquaint the people with the resistance effort of Viet Nam. Extra time at factories and government offices, besides, yielded over 700,000 florins and a great quantity of cloth and medicines for fighting Viet Nam.

o *Switzerland*:

The Support Viet Nam Committee has sent to the US government, the US Embassy in Berne, the permanent representative and the Secretary General of the UN a petition signed by 10,000 people condemning US air strikes against dykes and other hydraulic works in the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. A campaign has also been launched for medicines and medical instruments for Viet Nam.

o *West Berlin:*

In a new campaign for solidarity with Viet Nam under the auspices of the Permanent Committee for Peace and National and International Understanding, West Berliners have enthusiastically participated in money collects and signed their names to a petition for the immediate ending of the US aggression in Viet Nam, complete withdrawal of US troops, and shaping of South Viet Nam's destiny by the South Vietnamese people themselves.

o *Britain:*

At the 22nd PUGWASH Congress in Oxford with the participation of 110 scientists from 44 countries, the Permanent Committee of the movement released on September 13 a press communiqué condemning US crimes against the people in both parts of Viet Nam, and calling on the American people to push up their movement and stay the blood-stained hands of Nixon.

o *In various parts in the world,* actions have been taken by 110 WIDF affiliates recently for an immediate end to the US aggression in Viet Nam and for a fair political solution to the Viet Nam issue. Campaigns have been launched in the Soviet Union, the GDR, Canada, Finland, France, Iceland, Luxembourg, Mexico, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia, Argentina, Belgium, Sri Lanka, Denmark, West Germany, West Berlin and Japan for money, medicines, medical instruments, cloth, tinned milk, etc. for Viet Nam. First results: 50,000 roubles in the Soviet Union, 250,000 marks in the GDR, 25,000 dollars in Japan, 90,000 kr. in Sweden, 20,000 metres of cloth in Mongolia, etc.

The International Union of Women for Peace and Freedom has also sent Viet Nam 10,000 Swiss Frs. for the medical treatment of US bombing victims.

Impressive anti-war acts in Japan and West Berlin

ACCORDING to reports from Tokyo, strikes, schoolboycotts, meetings and demonstrations involving over one million workers, students and other people were staged in 31 cities and other localities throughout *Japan* on October 21. Participants urged an end to the US war of aggression in Indochina, dismantlement of all US military bases in Japan, and a stop to Japanese military buildup.

In Tokyo rallies were held at nine parks with the participation of around 100,000 people, who later paraded in the streets waving placards and chanting slogans calling for a halt to US aggression in the Indochinese countries.

Rail traffic was blocked by strikes, and students boycotted classes in 46 universities to join in protest actions.

In Okayama, Hiroshima, Nagano and Toyama, tens of thousands of workers affiliated to 180 trade unions and other mass organizations took part in meeting and passed resolutions for an immediate stop to US aggression in Indochina.

The previous day similar meetings and demonstrations had erupted in many urban areas.

—Also on October 21 over 8,000 youth demonstrated in the streets of *West Berlin* against the stepped-up US bombing in Indochina.

The demonstrators put up RSVN flags and chanted slogans demanding that the US get out of Viet Nam and West Germany.

The placards also pressed for a prompt withdrawal of US troops from Indochina, an immediate end to the US bombing in North Viet Nam, and acceptance of the 7-point peace plan of the RSVN PRG.

"Victory belongs to Viet Nam!" many of them read.

World opinion:

Another election ploy

A great stir swept all continents right after the statements of the DRVN Government and of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam were broadcast over *the Voice of Viet Nam Radio* and *Liberation Radio* on October 26 and 28, 1972.

The more people rejoiced at the prospect of peace brought about by the initiative of the DRVN Government with the full concurrence of the PRG, the greater was the frustration and indignation caused by the volte-face of the Nixon administration which is delaying the signing of the agreement on ending the war and restoring peace already reached between the United States and the DRVN.

Once again in its four-year term, the Nixon administration is facing a world-wide protest of the progressives.

According to initial reports, the goodwill and the aspiration for peace of the Vietnamese people transparent in these two statements were warmly acclaimed by many governments, public leaders and organizations throughout the world. These included the governments of the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Guinea, and Tanzania, the Central Committee of the Lao Patriotic Front, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the GDR, the Prime Ministers of China and Czechoslovakia the Chairman of the State Council of Bulgaria, the President of Chile and Guinea, the Chairman of the Hungarian Workers and Peasants Revolutionary Government, the First Vice-Premiers of the DPRK and Mongolia, the Chilean Foreign Ministry, the Cuban and Polish Foreign Ministers, the Romanian Vice Foreign Minister, the Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry of Algeria, various international bodies including the World Peace Council, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the World Federation of Democratic Women, the International Organization of Journalists, the OSPAAAL, various political patries, national organizations and mass organizations in France, Italy, Japan, West Germany, Finland, Norway, Irak... as well as many US Senators like McGovern, Kennedy, Proxmire, Brooke Church...

They came out unequivocally for the position of the Vietnamese people and urged the US government to sign immediately the said agreement.

Meetings and demonstrations against the manœuvre of the Nixon administration have erupted in Cuba, the GDR, India, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Norway, France and the United States. Petitions and messages bearing the signatures of hundreds of mass organizations in many countries have been sent to the US Embassies to press the United States to honour its word. Critical editorials and commentaries have been teeming in the world press and radio.

Here are samplings of the world opinion:

"With the full consent of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, the DRVN Government has worked out a draft 'Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam.' It is actually its goodwill and great concessions which have made possible an arrangement with the United States on the signing and implementation of such an agreement." (Statement of the GDR Government). This proves that "North Viet Nam has made great efforts to arrive at a negotiated settlement" (US Senator Brook), and "it would be a tragic mistake (for the US) if the US allows Thieu to delay the restoration of peace" (Edward Kennedy). "Only the signing and carrying out of this agreement according to the schedule already agreed upon can lead to the ending of the bloodshed and destruction in Viet Nam" (The Chairman of the Bulgarian State Council). At the same time, "this will create objective conditions favourable to ending the war and restoring peace in Laos and Cambodia and will make a major contribution to the safeguard of peace in Southeast Asia and the world" (Statement of the Central Committee of the Lao Patriotic Front). "The United States cannot evade its responsibility for the prolongation of the war in Viet Nam" (Chinese Prime Minister).

"The US explanations provoked by the disclosure of the DRVN shows a lack of seriousness in the negotiations. It is a very dangerous about-face against the Indochinese peoples, the American people and world opinion" (the Bulgarian paper *Rabotnichesko Delo*, October 27, 1972).

World opinion has scored the attempt of the Nixon administration to use the Thieu regime to cover up its trick.

The statement of the World Federation of Democratic Youth pointed out: "The intention of US imperialism to pretext difficulties raised by the Saigon administration was to delay the signing of the agreement, in an attempt to confuse public opinion and conceal their real objective, namely keep the Saigon administration in order to continue the war in Viet Nam and maintain US presence in Indochina."

The World Peace Council declared: "The excuses offered by the United States, especially the so-called difficulties raised by Saigon, cannot deceive the world people. Everyone knows that the Saigon administration has been set up by the US itself, and the Saigon mercenary army equipped and paid by the US. It is only an instrument for the US to carry out its 'Vietnamization' and neo-colonialism, infringing upon the national rights of the Vietnamese people..."

An editorial in the Japanese paper *Akahata* on October 28 wrote: "The present situation justifies Nixon's nickname Tricky Dick." Before the US presidential election of November 7, Nixon the aggressor is playing a dangerous double-dealing game. On the one hand, he is trying to create a situation where a solution to the Viet Nam problem seems to be near at hand to secure re-election by an absolute majority and also the majority of seats for his Republican Party in the elections to the Senate and House of Representatives by temporarily feigning to accept the new proposal of the Vietnamese side.

On the other hand, Nixon is pretexting the opposition of the Nguyen Van Thieu client regime to go back on what has been agreed upon with a view to clinging to South Viet Nam to the end...

Nixon's duplicity is another clear proof of a scheme to force the Vietnamese people to accept a peace plan *à l'Américaine*."

The French paper *L'Humanité* wrote on October 27: "It looks as if Mr Nixon really hoped that election day will come without his having to sign anything while he continues to create the impression that the negotiations are on the right track. That is actually what Kissinger is still trying to make the public believe on the evening of October 26. But if one naively let oneself be taken in and if one agreed to let the signing be put off further, Nixon would, once re-elected, freely decide to do what he thought fit to his neo-colonialist schemes in South Viet Nam."

And there has been widespread belief that the United States is really trying to keep Nguyen Van Thieu, and rely on this agent to delay the signing of the agreement already reached with the DRVN.

"The Nixon administration is very crafty. Its putting off the signing of the cease-fire agreement is an electoral move" (Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Hungarian Workers and Peasants Revolutionary Government).

"Thieu is only a puppet. He has no right to object a decision of the US. Therefore, the responsibility for the continuation of the war rests with the US government" (Statement of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party)...

HOANG HUY

At Algiers World Fair

YOU ARE ALREADY AMONG US

WE were leaving Algiers, shortly after the closing of the 9th World Fair. Algiers, beautiful and gracious Algiers, was receeding gradually behind the waves of the Mediteranean Sea. Yet, our hearts were still warm with the love the Algerians showed our people during the annual World Fair, organized for the ninth time in the capital of Algeria.

This year, the fair was marked by the 10th Independence Day of the Republic, its less pronounced commercial characters, and the participation in it of various national liberation movements.

The "Fighting South Viet Nam" pavilion, spruce and charming among her sisters from Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Angola, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, attracted a continuous flow of visitors, with exhibits fresh from the front.

The people we met, of all walks of life and ages, instantly became old acquaintances. Our hearts overbrimmed with love for one another, and our friends, out of excitement, could hardly express all that the fraternal people of Algeria had long been feeling for the Vietnamese standing in the forefront of the struggle against US imperialism.

We will never forget an old lady dressed in traditional white, who came to us with open arms, laughing and speaking merrily like a bosom friend after a prolonged absence. Her daughter, knowing our difficulty in understanding her, acted as our interpreter. "This is the first time my mother sees you. She says she is very glad and wishes you many successes in your fight against the US imperialists."

A gentleman, about 50, said to us he had read to his son, who had just learned the three R's, the captions of all the photos on show, and requested us to let the boy put down his impressions in the Visitors' Book. And our little friend carefully wrote this: "I'm an Algerian boy. I always think of Viet Nam. I wish you victory. Thank you." This is how an Algerian boy felt about Viet Nam, and his feeling proved that Viet Nam and Algeria though thousands of miles apart are always in the heart of each other.

There was another Algerian child, a chubby little girl of about five or six, accompanied by her parents. Pointing to her mother the photos of the weapons used by the South Viet Nam liberation forces, she said, "Mum, tell me how the Vietnamese uncles handle these." The mother threw us a knowing glance. I lifted the girl up to the level of the picture, and gave her the necessary comments. The girl put a finger on one showing a number of "pack" bicycles. Anticipating her daughter's query, the mother said: "Your Vietnamese uncles are still very poor. They have to use bikes for the transportation of ammunition. That's why we must support them more."

The pictures of US atrocities, though too few to illustrate all the horrible crimes the enemy has perpetrated, succeeded however in giving our friends a more or less vivid idea of our nation's suffering. President Houari Boumedienne himself lingered a long while in front of these photos. Another visitor wrote: "It was a great experience for me to visit the South Viet Nam pavilion, and I was very shocked by the war crimes I saw in the photos." "At the pavilion of the Vietnamese people," another Algerian confided, "I could see how my Vietnamese brothers and sisters suffered. We, too, once suffered very much. Your struggle, however, will advance to complete victory. Long live Viet Nam!"

We know their affection for us has been inspired by our previous struggles, the resistance we have waged relentlessly for more than a decade now, the sacrifice we have made, and our victories over US imperialism, the most ferocious enemy of our time and of history. We can read the following in the same Visitors' Book: "The Vietnamese people are the symbol of the militancy of the countries which value freedom and honour and which will accept nothing less than victory." "In the history of mankind, no nation has shown so great a courage and has made such sacrifices as the Vietnamese people. The South Vietnamese people, strengthened by their trust in the NFL, will defeat the US imperialists and will be the victor."

Support for Viet Nam. This was the common will of our Algerian friends, which was so obvious in the Visitors' Book and during our meetings with them.

Many youths, after seeing the photos of the "Battalion of Victorious Algeria," came to us with questions like these: "Dear Vietnamese friends, isn't it now the time for us to go to Viet Nam to fight by your side?", "Can we go and join the Battalion?", "Will you take us in?"

Yes, you are already among us, in the ranks of the combatants now victoriously fighting US aggression on the land of Viet Nam. And you are marching shoulder to shoulder with the South Vietnamese people toward independence and freedom.

V. K.

SOUTH VIET NAM — CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION